



COMDTINST 16711.1
31 JANUARY 2003

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 16711.1

Subj: COAST GUARD PASSENGER VESSEL SAFETY, PREVENTION AND MASS RESCUE
OPERATIONS PROGRAM

- PURPOSE. This Instruction describes the objectives and scope of the Passenger Vessel Safety, Prevention, and Mass Rescue Operation Program and the functional descriptions and responsibilities of Marine Safety and Operations program elements of the Coast Guard organization.
- ACTION. Headquarters Program Managers, Area and District Commanders, Commanding Officers of Marine Safety Offices and Activities/Group Commanders will adhere to the contents of this Instruction. Internet release authorized.
- DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
- POLLUTION PREVENTION (P2) CONSIDERATIONS. Pollution prevention considerations were examined in the development of this directive and have been determined not to be applicable.
- DISCUSSION. Congress authorized twenty-two permanent billets starting FY02 for the Coast Guard's Passenger Vessel Safety Program. The billets are assigned according to Enclosure (1). The objective of the program is to enable the response community (Coast Guard, other Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as industry and other stake holders) to have processes and procedures to prevent, or if necessary, to respond to and mitigate a passenger vessel emergency, taking into account all available resources. A Mass Rescue Operation (MRO) is a civil search and rescue activity characterized by the need for immediate assistance to a large number of persons in distress, such that the capabilities normally available to search and rescue authorities are inadequate. A passenger vessel incident could lead to a MRO. MRO scenarios include responses to both man-made and natural incidents such as hurricanes, heavy flooding and earthquakes. Detailed program objectives are discussed in Enclosure (2).

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

The Coast Guard recognizes that to effectively respond to a passenger vessel incident, close cooperation between the Marine Safety and Operations communities is essential. In any incident involving a passenger vessel, members of the Marine Safety community are typically expected to establish and maintain effective links with internal and external emergency management, firefighting, and salvage entities while members from the Operations community focus on marshalling and employing internal and external search and rescue resources. It is also acknowledged that both the Marine Safety and Operations communities need to work in concert with industry, state, local and volunteer agencies to focus on preventing passenger vessel incidents as well as preparing to respond to them.

- a. This program applies to both the U.S. domestic passenger fleet and foreign flagged passenger vessels operating out of U.S. ports. Category (a) vessels include U.S. domestic passenger vessels (built in accordance with 46 CFR Subchapters T, K, and H.), Category (b) includes foreign flag passenger vessels operating from U. S ports and Category (c) includes vessels carrying 6 or fewer passengers (6-packs) for hire in accordance with 46 CFR, Subchapter C.
 - b. The number of vessels in the U.S. inspected passenger vessel fleet of 100 gross tons (GT) and under is approximately 6000 vessels. There are currently around 200 Subchapter H vessels over 100 GT under U.S. registry. In addition, the fleet of approximately 130 foreign flagged passenger vessels that embark passengers in U.S. ports is growing at an average rate of 10 ships a year. The exact number of uninspected category (c) vessels is unknown, however, with over 45,000 merchant mariners licenses issued to operators of vessels under 100 gross tons, the fleet is likely in the thousands, nationwide.
6. PROCEDURE. Headquarters Program Managers, Area and District Commanders, Commanding Officers of Marine Safety Offices and Activities/Group Commanders will conduct activities as appropriate to meet the requirements delineated in the Program Description (Enclosure 3). Enclosure (4) describes the functional areas and responsibilities of the various Headquarters offices involved in this Program, and Enclosure (5) outlines the relationship between these offices.
7. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

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Encl: (1) Passenger Vessel Safety Specialists, Exercise and Response Billets
(2) Program Objectives
(3) Program Description
(4) Functional Descriptions
(5) Passenger Vessel Safety Program Relationships

PASSENGER VESSEL SAFETY SPECIALISTS, EXERCISE AND RESPONSE BILLETS

This enclosure details the various military and civilian grades of the authorized billets and where they are assigned.

A. Headquarters Program billets:

1. Overall Program Manager and Program Manager, Prevention Activities @ Commandant (G-MOC) – 04
2. Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) Activities @ Commandant (G-OPR) – 04
3. Co-Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Contingency Planning and Emergency Response Activities @ Commandant (G-MOR) – GS 13
4. Co-Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Contingency Planning and Emergency Response Activities @ Commandant (G-OPF) – GS 13

B. Exercise planner @ National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC) – GS 12

C. Passenger Vessel Program outreach and Coordination Specialist @ MSO San Juan – GS 12

D. Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialists @ districts

1. D1 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 13
2. D5 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 12
3. D7 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 13
4. D8 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 13
5. D9 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 12
6. D11 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 13
7. D13 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist– 04
8. D14 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 13
9. D17 Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist–GS 12

E. Passenger Vessel Marine Inspection / Prevention billets

1. Passenger vessel plan review (general engineer) @ Marine Safety Center–GS 13
2. Marine inspector @ MSD St. Thomas–04
3. Marine inspector @ MSD St. Thomas–GS 12
4. Marine inspector @ MSO Honolulu–GS 13
5. Marine inspector @ MSO New Orleans–GS 12
6. CVE School Chief / Marine Inspector @ MSO Miami – 04
7. Marine Inspector @ MSO Juneau–GS 12

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objective of the program is to enable the response community, which includes the Coast Guard, other Federal, State, and local government agencies, industry and other stake holders, to establish processes and procedures to prevent, and if necessary, to respond to and mitigate a passenger vessel emergency. The two major program elements are:

A. Incident Prevention

1. HQ Program Managers shall work with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the passenger vessel industry, other federal, and state regulatory agencies to promote, establish and maintain effective standards for passenger and crew evacuation, lifesaving, fire prevention and fire fighting, vessel construction, inspection, crew training and qualifications, vessel security and vessel movement control.
2. HQ Program Managers and District Passenger Vessel Safety Specialists shall ensure Coast Guard field personnel are fully aware of and equipped to execute prevention programs in cooperation with industry and the public.
3. Personnel at all levels shall promote risk-based decision-making throughout the industry regarding company and vessel management, operations, and maintenance.
4. District and field level personnel shall conduct outreach, education, and awareness training with local community and other stakeholders.

B. Incident Response Preparedness and Mitigation

1. Personnel at all levels, in cooperation with the response community, shall use risk-based methodology to identify realistic passenger vessel casualty scenarios, including people, property and environment put at risk by those scenarios, develop preparedness and contingency plans, strategies and tactics that can be practicably applied to mitigate those risks, and define a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in executing those strategies and tactics. A unit's need for and level of plan development and exercises will be dependent upon the use of a risk-based assessment of the unit's AOR. As a rule of thumb, and at a minimum, organizations down to the Group and Marine Safety Office (or equivalent) level would be expected to develop and maintain an MRO contingency plan.
2. HQ Program Managers and District Passenger Vessel Safety Specialists shall involve and garner consensus of the entire response community to the extent practicable, including Coast Guard "M" & "O" units. District Passenger Vessel Safety Specialists are strongly encouraged to coordinate with district and other contingency planners in overseeing and coordinating the MRO exercise program. Exercise frequency will be as directed in the

Contingency Preparedness Planning Manual and Area and/or District Contingency Preparedness Guidelines. Responsibilities are divided in the following manner:

- i. Marine Safety Offices shall have the responsibility for coordinating with and accessing response management, firefighting, anti-terrorism and salvage resources for all incidents (including but not limited to: local/state fire and police and emergency management agencies, other federal agency emergency response personnel, industry responders including firefighting and salvage providers)
 - ii. Group, District and Area SAR offices shall have the responsibility for coordinating with and accessing search and rescue resources for all incidents including air and surface search platforms and for identifying and requesting assistance from all available assets, including commercial vessels in the immediate vicinity of an incident.
3. District Passenger Vessel Specialists shall work with District planning staffs to develop and/or enhance District level MRO OPLAN and work with field units to ensure compatibility with existing field level planning documents/doctrine. (e.g., OP Plans, Counter-Terrorism, Area Contingency Plans, etc.).
4. District Passenger Vessel Safety Specialists shall monitor the exercise program for their AOR to ensure periodic exercises of the contingency and emergency response strategies are conducted with the local response community and all stakeholders.

Program Description

- A. For all U.S. passenger vessels inspected under Subchapters K, T and H and all foreign flagged passenger vessels (categories (a) and (b) of this program respectively), the Coast Guard will:
1. Use risk-based methodology to identify realistic passenger vessel casualty scenarios, and people, property and environment put at risk by those scenarios. Develop strategies and tactics that can be practicably applied in mitigating those risks, and identify clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in executing those strategies and tactics.
 2. Develop plans and implement procedures to prevent the occurrence of a mass personnel casualty incident involving a passenger vessel.
 3. Leverage Coast Guard “M” and “O” resources to engage partners and stakeholders to mitigate a casualty if it were to occur.
 4. Develop a schedule of response/evacuation exercises to enhance readiness for casualty response.
 5. Develop emergency preparedness and exercise evaluation criteria that address Human Factors, emergency equipment availability and deployment, crew performance, management structure, and effectiveness of plans and procedures.
 6. Promote crew training and competence aboard passenger vessels.
 7. Train the various elements of the emergency response system for maritime response issues.
 8. Implement new programs to reduce deaths, injuries and property damage resulting from passenger vessel incidents.
- B. For all uninspected passenger vessels carrying 6 or fewer passengers and regulated under Subchapter C (category (c) of this program), the Coast Guard will:
1. Conduct awareness and outreach programs to educate the impacted industry.
 2. Work with State and local agencies to set-up cooperative compliance enforcement programs, as applicable.
 3. Leverage Coast Guard resources such as Coast Guard Auxiliary and Coast Guard Reserve to achieve safety objectives.

FUNCTIONAL DESCRIPTIONS

The following functional descriptions are applicable to category (a) and (b) vessels, except where noted:

A. Overall Program Oversight and Program Manager, Prevention Activities at Commandant (G-MOC)

1. Oversee the Program {vessels in category (a), (b) and (c)}.
2. Support Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPF) in developing emergency response and contingency planning and exercise guidance documents.
3. Determine funding needs for district personnel engaged in outreach and training efforts under the program and coordinate funding and budget requests as appropriate.
4. Coordinate funding and resource acquisition with Commandant (G-MOR), (G-OPR), (G-OPF) and National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC) as appropriate, to execute the planning and exercise program requirements.
5. Coordinate national and international industry partnership activities and other elements of the program between the Marine Safety and Operations communities at CG headquarters and monitor proper functioning of the same at the District and unit levels.
6. Work with Commandant (G-MOR), (G-OPF), (G-MSE) and NSFCC to develop preparedness and exercise evaluation criteria that address Human Factors, emergency equipment availability and deployment, crew performance, management structure, and effectiveness of plans and procedures.
7. Monitor district and field implementation of risk assessment, and planning and exercise guidance, to ensure effective execution and avoidance of conflict, duplication, or overlap with existing preparedness programs.
8. Oversee the training of the various elements of the emergency response system.
9. Maintain current, and implement new programs with necessary improvements to reduce deaths, injuries and property damage resulting from passenger vessel incidents.
10. Keep senior management apprised on status of program including activities conducted, exercises held, exercises planned, resource or legislative gaps, and measures in process to close any identified gaps.
11. Assist Commandant (G-OPF) and (G-MOR) to set-up, or tie into existing CG mechanisms, procedures for sharing information and lessons learned in a timely manner and ensure its continued implementation.

12. Periodically visit and participate in exercises that test Passenger Vessel Emergency Responses.

B. Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) Activities@ G-OPR

1. Manage Coast Guard MRO responsibilities under the National Search and Rescue Plan, coordinate MRO issues with other parties to the Plan, and resolve MRO matters within the scope of both the National SAR Plan and the Federal Response Plan.
2. Identify shortfalls and problems associated with MROs and initiate Search And Rescue (SAR) program action to address these issues.
3. Develop HQ policy for inclusion in Commandant directives and publications covering responsibilities of the Coast Guard's SAR system for MRO contingency planning, exercises and response and monitor field implementation of the same.
4. Coordinate passenger vessel safety and MRO partnership activities between "M" and "O" offices at CG headquarters.
5. Coordinate with Commandant (G-OPF), (G-MOR), (G-MOC), other Headquarters offices, field units and industry to develop a national schedule for conducting required passenger vessel safety and MRO field and tabletop exercises.
6. Provide input to Commandant (G-OPF), (G-MOR), and (G-MOC) in their development of MRO contingency plans and related policies.
7. Work in partnership with industry (ex: International Council of Cruise Lines, Passenger Vessel Association, etc.) to develop, coordinate and represent Coast Guard policies and positions related to pertinent passenger vessel SAR and MRO issues.
8. Sponsor and support the work of NSARC and other SAR organizations in their efforts in planning and sponsoring MRO exercises, conferences, and workshops.
9. Foster international engagement on MRO issues:
 - i. Engage with international stakeholders on SAR exercises and agreements
 - ii. Participate in international exercises
 - iii. Ensure updated response guidance on MROs incorporated into the appropriate governing documents (e.g. IAMSAR Manual)
 - iv. Assist in developing U. S. positions and ensure national compliance with relevant treaty obligations and with applicable IMO standards
10. Identify strategic methods for improving overall national readiness for handling MROs, including changes in organizational, operational, and technological processes.

C. Co-Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Contingency Planning and Emergency Response Activities @ Commandant (G-OPF)

1. Working closely with Commandant (G-MOR), (G-OPR), (G-MOC) and NSFCC, develop and include in the Coast Guard's master exercise schedule, the appropriate response/evacuation exercises to enhance readiness for casualty response.
2. Develop criteria to assess emergency preparedness and exercise performance. The evaluation criteria will address issues such as Human Factors, emergency equipment availability and deployment, crew performance, management structure, and effectiveness of plans and procedures. Ensure that these evaluation criteria are properly placed in the Exercise Planning Manual to promote standardization throughout the Coast Guard.
3. Create the appropriate policy and doctrine from which district and port level planners can amend their existing plans to include standardized MRO information.
4. Develop funding and staffing needs to carry out the exercise and planning programs.
5. Develop emergency response and contingency planning and exercise guidance.
6. Periodically visit and participate in exercises that test Passenger Vessel Emergency Responses.
7. Monitor Coast Guard Standard After Action Information and Lessons Learned System (CGSAILS) inputs derived from Passenger Vessel Emergency Response exercises.

D. Co-Program Manager, Passenger Vessel Contingency Planning and Emergency Response Activities @ Commandant (G-MOR)

Working in close coordination with NSFCC, Commandant (G-OPR), (G-MOC), and industry, assist Commandant (G-OPF) in developing the following programs, policy, and procedures, and in identifying funding and resources required to execute them:

1. A national program for conducting field and tabletop exercises
2. Guidance for conducting contingency response and contingency planning.
3. Process and strategies for conducting government-led MRO exercises
4. Guidelines on scope and process for design and execution of industry-led area exercises.
5. Facilitate design, documentation, and production of government and industry led exercises.
6. Criteria to assess emergency preparedness and exercise performance. The evaluation criteria will address issues such as Human Factors, emergency equipment availability and

deployment, crew performance, management structure, and effectiveness of plans and procedures.

7. Procedures for sharing information and lessons learned in a timely manner and ensure its continued implementation.
8. Procedures to ensure continuous improvement in the development, implementation, and conduct of these exercises.

E. Response Training and Exercise Coordinator at The National Strike Force Coordination Center (NSFCC)

1. Support Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPF) in developing exercise schedules, developing contingency response and contingency planning guidance and estimating exercise funding requirements.
2. Coordinate with Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPR) to develop ICS response doctrine unique to MRO operations and include doctrine in the Coast Guard Incident Management Handbook.
3. Coordinate with Commandant (G-MOR) incident management training for MRO response personnel. Training to range from basic Incident Command System (ICS) courses to National/Regional Incident Command.
4. Develop process and strategies for conducting government-led area exercises (in cooperation with Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPF)), including identifying funding and resource requirements.
5. Develop clear guidelines on scope and process for design and execution of industry-led area exercises (in cooperation with Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPF)), including identifying funding and resource requirements.
6. Initially, provide consultative support to district and field unit exercise planners for large MRO exercises and attend large exercises as appropriate. Facilitate design, documentation, and production of government and industry led exercises (in cooperation with Commandant (G-MOR) and (G-OPF)), after identified funding and resource needs are met.

F. Passenger Vessel Program Outreach and Coordination Specialist - Districts

For vessels that fall under category (a) and (b):

1. Coordinate with headquarters and field units to maintain an effective passenger vessel prevention, preparedness and response program.

2. Monitor and coordinate the activities of the field units within their AOR to enhance passenger vessel safety (incident prevention). Provide program training and policy interpretation to field and feedback to headquarters concerning policy and program implementation concerns expressed by the field.
3. Work with the regional passenger vessel industry, federal, and state regulatory agencies to promote, and maintain effective standards for passenger and crew evacuation, lifesaving, fire prevention and fire fighting, vessel and terminal security, vessel construction, inspection, crew training and qualifications, and vessel movement control. Ensure Coast Guard field personnel are fully aware of and equipped to execute prevention programs in cooperation with industry and the public.
4. Promote risk-based decision-making within industry regarding company and vessel management, operations, and maintenance.
5. In cooperation with the response community, use risk-based methodology to identify realistic passenger vessel casualty scenarios, including people, property and environment put at risk by those scenarios. Develop strategies and tactics that can be practicably applied in mitigating those risks, and define a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in executing those strategies and tactics.
6. Involve and garner consensus of the entire response community to the extent practicable including Coast Guard Marine Safety & Operations units.
 - i. Marine Safety units have responsibility for coordinating with and accessing response management, firefighting and salvage resources for all incidents (including but not limited to: local/state fire and police and emergency management agencies, other federal agency emergency response personnel, industry responders including firefighting and salvage providers).
 - ii. Operations units have responsibility for coordinating with and accessing search and rescue resources for all incidents including air and surface search and search platforms and for identifying and requesting assistance from commercial vessels in the immediate vicinity of an incident.
7. Improve MRO OPLAN and work with field units to ensure compatibility with existing field level planning documents/doctrine. (e.g., OP Plans, Area Contingency Plans).
8. Promote training programs within the Coast Guard and the local response community so that response personnel are adequately trained to work cooperatively under the Incident Command and Unified Command System.
9. Work with district and field unit contingency/exercise planning staffs to periodically exercise the contingency and emergency response strategies with the local response community and all stakeholders.

For vessels that fall under category (c):

10. Conduct awareness and outreach programs to educate the impacted industry.
11. Work with State and local agencies to set-up voluntary or enforcement programs.
12. Leverage Coast Guard resources such as Coast Guard Auxiliary and Coast Guard Reserve to achieve safety objectives.

PASSENGER VESSEL SAFETY PROGRAM RELATIONSHIPS

